

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

The Bureau is responsible for managing 264 million acres of land -- about one-eighth of the land in the United States -- and about 300 million acres of subsurface mineral resources. The Bureau is also responsible for wildfire management and suppression on 388 million acres.

Strategic Plan

The Bureau of Land Management has developed a strategic plan that lays out its strategic goals, strategic objectives, performance goals, and performance measures. The five strategic goals are:

- To serve current and future publics;
- To restore and maintain the health of the land;
- To promote collaborative management;
- To improve business practices; and
- To improve human resources management.

Selected strategic objectives and 1996 accomplishments are discussed in the following sections.

Providing Opportunities for Environmentally Responsible Recreation

In the past 10 years, an explosive growth has occurred in the more traditional recreational pursuits of fishing, camping, river rafting, winter sports, motorized sports, and wildlife viewing. The Bureau has also experienced a dramatic growth in visitation to the public lands, from about 51 million in 1994 to almost 59 million in 1996 (Figure 12).

In 1996, the Bureau aggressively embraced the recreation fee pilot demonstration program and continued to develop creative and innovative alternative funding

Figure 12

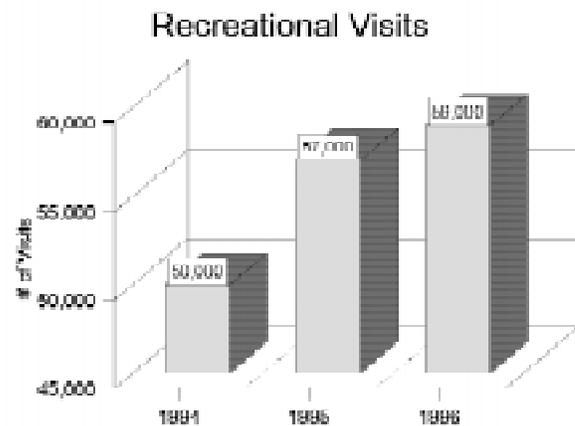
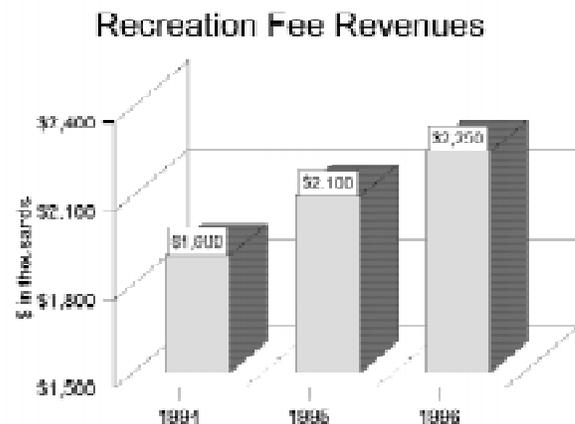


Figure 13



sources and resources to accomplish its mission. Figure 13 depicts the recent growth in recreation fee revenues.

Preserving Our Natural and Cultural Heritage

The Bureau is responsible for protecting and preserving paleontological localities and archaeological and historical sites. The 264 million acres administered by the Bureau are considered to be some of the most ecologically and culturally diverse and scientifically important lands managed by any Federal agency. During 1996, the Bureau:

- Began management and planning activities for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. This monument was created by Presidential Proclamation on September 18, 1996, and is the Bureau's first and only national monument.



At work on BLM land (photo by BLM).

- Consulted with over 150 Native American tribes and Alaska Native villages and corporations pursuant to the requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Providing Opportunities for Environmentally Responsible Commercial Activities

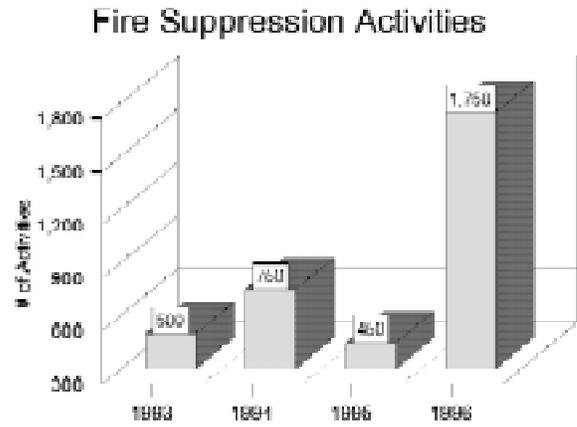
Bureau-administered public land provides a number of important commercial goods and services, such as minerals, timber, grazing, and realty (rent), all of which have market value. These commercial uses contribute to national and State economies and employment. In 1996, the market value of production occurring on public lands was approximately \$10.5 billion. This production was dominated by mineral lease production -- oil, gas, and coal -- with valuation of approximately \$8.8 billion.

Reducing Threats to Public Health, Safety, and Property

The Bureau administers several programs designed to achieve the strategic goal of protecting public health, safety, property, and resources. Response capability and responsiveness are the central focus of public safety programs. In 1996, the Bureau accomplished the following:

- Completed 252 prescribed fire projects covering 50,282 acres.
- Completed 26,000 flight hours for fire suppression activities with no aircraft accidents or personal injuries.

Figure 14



- Initiated 7,708 investigations and enforcement actions.
- Identified 6,650 abandoned mine safety hazards.
- Cleaned up 86 hazardous sites.
- Maintained and improved 10,700 miles of roads and 13,700 miles of trails.

In addition, as noted in Figure 14, the Bureau's fire suppression activities have expanded from less than 500,000 acres in 1993 to over 1.5 million acres in 1996 due to the unprecedented increase in natural wildfires.

Improving Land, Resource, and Title Information

The Bureau is the official custodian of land use and title records for the public and acquired lands of the United States, and is responsible for the official survey of all public lands, including the legal identification of all Federal land boundaries and the maintenance of the Public Land Survey System.

In response to the overwhelming requests for use of Federal lands, the Bureau began recording new Federal lease and title transaction information in electronic form on a mainframe computer. At the end of 1996, there were 64,000 active mineral leases and over 530,000 active and closed cases in the electronic database. In 1996, the Bureau also defined requirements for a system to automate the case processing activities and enable a spatially accurate portrayal of the Federal lands and leases on those lands. This system is called the Automated Land and Mineral Records System.

Providing Economic and Technical Assistance

Bureau-managed public lands generate substantial revenue for the Federal Government. Much of this revenue is returned in direct payments to States and counties. These are distributed to local governments to pay for such things as schools, roads, and salaries of county commissioners.

In 1996, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program provided over \$110 million in payments to public land counties.

Restoring and Maintaining the Health of Upland Areas

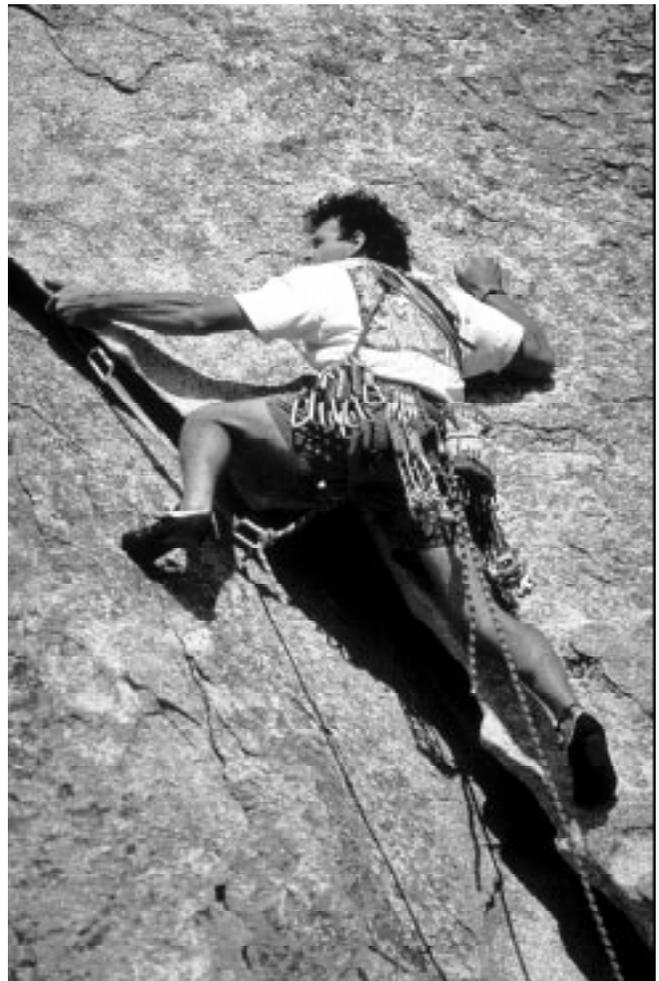
During 1996, the Bureau prepared watershed analyses on 129,000 acres of Pacific Northwest old-growth forests and an additional 950,000 acres outside of western Oregon. In addition, 98 new projects were completed in 1996 to improve water and soil quality and reduce soil loss and erosion, and 584 existing programs were maintained.

Ecological Site Inventories (ESIs) are used to establish baseline data to support both monitoring and activity planning, and to decide the extent, condition, and potential of upland management areas. During 1996, nearly 1,315,300 acres of upland habitat were inventoried using the ESI method.

Restoring and Maintaining the Health of Riparian, Wetland, and Aquatic Areas

Riparian, wetland, and aquatic habitat management encompasses over 16 million acres of lentic wetlands (lakes and ponds) and 180,600 miles of lotic riparian areas (rivers and streams). In the arid regions of the western United States, these areas are extremely important to fish and wildlife as well as livestock. In 1996, the Bureau focused its riparian restoration effort on those areas that are functioning but at risk. These are the areas that are at most risk of being degraded if action is not taken to protect or restore them.

The 1996 restoration efforts included the implementation of 283 riparian projects and maintenance of 493 projects. Implementation and maintenance of these projects, combined with on-the-ground management actions,



Rockclimbing (photo by BLM).

resulted in improvement of about 6,000 acres of lentic wetland and 1,600 miles of lotic riparian areas.

Conserving and Recovering Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals

Bureau lands provide habitat for nearly 300 listed or proposed threatened and endangered plant and animal species and numerous other species that are candidates for Federal listing under the Endangered Species Act. In 1996, the Bureau assisted in developing and implementing more than 75 threatened or endangered species recovery plans.

Status of the Government Performance and Results Act Implementation

As the Bureau of Land Management celebrates its 50th Anniversary, it is working to chart a new course to lead the agency into the next century. Responding to the

All In A Day's Work

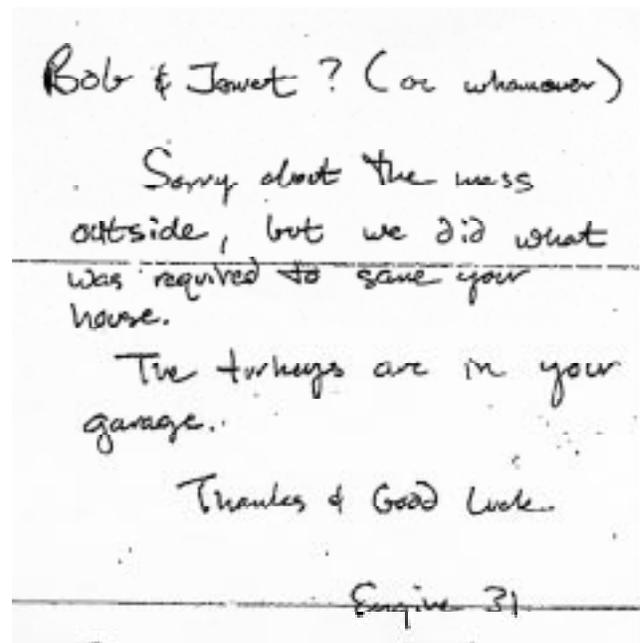
Mid-afternoon on August 9, 1996, firefighters from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Idaho Falls District were dispatched to the "Shrives Fire" in Southeastern Idaho. When BLM firefighters arrived, there was a strong, gusty north wind blowing which was spreading the fire and rapidly driving it in the direct path of several homes and other structures.

The fire management team, consisting of **Greg Burch, Bob Mallet, and Fred Judd**, called in an air tanker to attempt to control the direction of the fire and more quickly contain it. The plane immediately began laying retardant lines in an effort to steer fire away from homes. At the same time, the crews of BLM engines 383, 372, 351, and 361 were strategically positioned in an attempt to protect the homes and lives being threatened by this raging fire storm. One of these homes belonged to Bob and Chris.

Chris watched the fire coming toward her home. Then she saw firefighters coming up her driveway, and expected that they would tell her to evacuate. This did not happen. Instead, the firefighters got out of their trucks and without a word, began to remove the lower limbs from trees and to remove highly flammable brush from around the home. The fire got closer and closer, and Chris was sure that evacuation was eminent and that she would have to watch the fire swallow her home. This too did not happen. Chris said that the BLM firefighters showed no emotion to indicate that they were afraid of the fire; instead, they took on what she called "the attitude that this fire monster was not going to get by them and destroy the home which they were there to protect."

When it was all over, Chris' home was still standing along with seven other homes involved in the Shrives Fire. Chris has repeated many times that there is no way to ever thank the BLM for the job their firefighters did that day. She also said that when a critical situation like this one occurs, people really begin to realize just how important our government is to us and just how fortunate we are to have such dedicated people in it. Chris refers to the firefighters who saved her home as her Best Loyal Men (BLM).

Individuals performing extraordinary deeds in the performance of their normal duties occurs virtually every day somewhere in the West during each year's April through November wildfire season—for BLM firefighters, it's all in a day's work.



After saving a house from fire, Engine Company No. 31 leaves a note for the occupants.

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, the National Performance Review, and other initiatives, the Bureau has developed a draft Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan outlines the mission-oriented goals and objectives for the agency over the next 3-5 years. In addition, the plan proposes time-based performance targets for which progress will be measured and reported annually. The Annual Report is the second of such reports the Bureau has produced - the first was for fiscal year 1995. The Annual Report will provide better and more meaningful measurements of progress toward desired resource conditions, customer satisfaction, and other results over the next several years. In 1997, the Bureau will be required to develop Annual Performance Plans that link performance measures to the goals set for the agency. It is envisioned that each goal will have one or more measures of outcome in terms that are understandable and can direct the allocation of funds and personnel, as well as management decisions. In this way, the Bureau will increase its accountability to taxpayers and Congress which provide and allocate funds for managing the public lands.

Customer Service

During the past year, the Bureau has used the results of its 1995 national survey of customers to establish new



Wild animals on BLM land (photo by BLM).

customer service standards, initiate redesign teams to address customer concerns, and establish a new comment card system for customer feedback. The Bureau and the Forest Service, working in concert, have established joint standards for measuring customer satisfaction.

Here is how the Bureau is doing in meeting its standards:

- 91 percent of customers agreed that they were welcomed with prompt, courteous service.
- 90 percent of customers agreed that they were provided the information they requested or needed.
- 88 percent of customers agreed that BLM's processes were clear and efficient.
- 83 percent of customers agreed that they were satisfied with BLM's facilities.

Creating Seamless Service: The Bureau and the U.S. Forest Service have initiated two regional partnerships to listen to customers, design more customer-friendly business processes and services, and deliver these services to people in the most convenient and cost-effective way. The southern Colorado and central Oregon teams have initiated over 40 cost and time-saving changes in their offices, including:

- Collocating U.S. Forest Service and Bureau offices to develop a "one-stop-shop" for the public;
- Establishing fair and consistent prices for firewood permits; and

Mineral Outreach Program Reaches Out to Boy Scouts

For the past few summers, **Jim Spotts**, a conservationist at OSM's Appalachian Region Coordinating Center in Pittsburgh, and **Paul Behum**, a hydrologist at OSM's Mid-Continent Coordinating Center in Alton, Illinois, have shared their professional skills and knowledge with Boy Scouts through the Bureau of Land Management's Mineral Outreach Program.

Part of a cooperative effort between the Department and the Boy Scouts of America, the Mineral Outreach Program encourages Interior employees to work with scouts in the outdoors. Spotts and Behum help out at Philmont, the world's largest scout ranch, which is located in northern New Mexico.

Spotts and Behum are stationed at Cypher's Mine and Baldy Town, where gold mining was important from the late 1880s through 1940. Behum helps Philmont's geologists find abandoned mines and shafts used for gold and copper mining. Spotts guides the hikers through the hard rock mine and teaches them how to pan for gold in a nearby creek.

One goal of the Mineral Outreach Program is to show the scouts how mining relates to the environment. For example, they learn that hydraulic mining directs pressurized water into floodplain stream banks to dislodge gold carried in alluvial deposits. The water causes soil erosion and pollutes streams with sediment. In addition, refining and concentrating processes can produce toxic levels of mercury and cyanide.

In panning for gold, the scouts are allowed to keep any gold they find but most soon learn that getting rich quick isn't as easy as it sounds. The scouts also discover that living conditions for miners were primitive and the work hard and dangerous. Few miners lived beyond the age of 40.

- Sharing personnel and resources to better serve customers.

Ultimately the cutting-edge ideas from these two sites will be incorporated in the rest of the Bureau as the way to do business.

Increasing Productivity: The cadastral survey program, which oversees the maintenance of the Public Land Survey System, is implementing changes and improvements that were requested by customers. When tested, these changes proved to save more than 50 percent in production and delivery times.